



## **Parks and Recreation Programming Master Plan**

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### **Hurst Athletic Complex**

Suggestions and recommendations for facility upgrade

**Prepared by Halff Associates, Inc.**

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The Hurst Parks and Recreation staff requested Halff Associates to look at options to upgrade the Hurst Athletic Complex as part of the Hurst Parks and Recreation Programming Master Plan. Specific issues that were to be addressed include:

1. Additional parking for sport events
2. Improvement of the overall drainage system
3. Connection between soccer fields 1-6 and 7-9
4. Development of the northeast part of the park (previously called the "old tree farm")
5. Aesthetic improvement of the park

Halff presented three alternative options. It was explained that no concept is absolute. In fact, each concept was developed in such a manner as to allow for "mixing and matching", i.e. elements of the one can replace elements of another as determined by budget, phasing and/or goals. Staff chose the elements that they believe answer their requirements best and are presented below.

#### Additional parking for sport events

Adequate space is the main limiting factor for providing additional parking at the site of the Hurst Athletic Complex. Three options were proposed:

1. Off-site parking with park users brought in by bus from existing parking areas, during major sport gatherings. This option should have the least impact from an economic and ecological point of view.
2. Acquisition of vacant land to the north of the Athletic Complex. This option may be costly due to land purchasing.
3. Piping of the tributary to Lorean Branch to make land available for parking. The Master Plan in general recommends that no piping in the City be done and that existing drainage pipes be "daylighted" where possible. Although in principle this requirement should apply to this option as well, the drainage channel is already piped, upstream from this particular point.

Staff opted for the last option, which results in the provision 60 additional parking spaces with direct access to the soccer fields.

#### Connection between soccer fields 1-6 and 7-9

The stream piping allows for the soccer fields to be consolidated with a main entrance from the existing parking lot. This allows for better organization in terms of access, restroom and concession facilities.



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### Improvement of the overall drainage system

For the drainage system it is recommended to restore the creek to a viable aquatic habitat that supports stream fringe plants as well as amphibians and other water fauna. It is suggested that the stream bank be stabilized by means of wetland prairie plants and that the establishment of natural biota in the creek environment be encouraged. Limited ponding of the creek will provide further interest and the opportunity for environmental learning together with the establishment of native grasses and wildflowers. In fact, it is suggested to empty the pipe that runs under the proposed parking area, into a pond in order to dissipate the water's flow energy. For stream improvement it is recommended that hydrology and hydraulic engineers be consulted.

### Development of the northeast part of the park

Through the acquisition of land to the northeast of the park it is recommended to develop a neighborhood park. Amenities may include a playground, volleyball court, picnic pavilion, pedestrian bridge and a few parking spaces. This will meet the need for additional parkland in the City of Hurst as identified in the Hurst Parks and Recreation Programming Master Plan. It is recommended to develop an entryway from Highway 26 that will not only provide access to the neighborhood park, but also poses the opportunity for additional parking with direct access to the Athletic Complex.

### Aesthetic improvement of the park

Trees are vastly lacking at this park. Shade trees at the edges of the various ball fields will provide welcome relieve from the hot sun. Trees can also be used to create pleasing promenades along the creek. It is suggested that all newly acquired land as well as existing park land be established with native plants including grasses and wildflowers. In fact, it is recommended that turf areas be reduced to the minimum, and only where required, for ball play, picnic or grass seating.

### General

A trail with an integrated fitness course is recommended around the softball fields and for the full length of the creek with a suggested connection along Lorean Branch down to Smith-Barfield Park.

### Conclusion

An upgrade of the Hurst Athletic Complex poses the opportunity to acquire land that will not only benefit the Athletic Complex with additional parking but also for the development of a viable neighborhood park. An additional benefit is that the "old tree farm" area that has become secluded due to the recent housing development east of the Athletic Complex can effectively be included as part of the neighborhood park. The recommended plan has an extensive network of trails that will answer in the need for trails as identified in the Master Plan. A restored creek system will provide for much needed natural habitat, which was also identified as lacking in the city.